

## **Congratulatory Remarks for the Bahraini-American Cultural Exchange Society**

*Assistant Acting Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs Miller Crouch*

No aspect of the U.S. Government's public diplomacy is more of a marketplace, more of an open dialogue and more of an ongoing community-driven interchange than our international educational and cultural programs. And those of you, who have experienced another culture, whether in the U.S. or another country, know all too well that its impact is transformational. As alumni of this very exclusive community, you know that your exchange experience doesn't stop when you return home. This is why it is so important that you have chosen to start the Bahrain American Cultural Exchange Society, it is as a way to continue your exchange and share your experience with others in your community and country.

Our nation must engage with the rest of the world. To be successful, all sides must speak and all sides must listen through conversations, not monologues. Many of these conversations, I am proud to say, begin with exchange programs like those represented in your new organization. Our Office of Alumni Affairs is committed to supporting exchange program alumni, both through the State Alumni website, which has excellent resources for you, as well as through our Embassy in Manama.

On behalf of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Department of State, I wish you all the best and much success as you embark on this new journey.